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On *Roeweriella balcanica*, a mysterious species of *Marpissa* from the Balkan Peninsula (Araneae, Salticidae)

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Abstract: The taxonomic position of the poorly known species *Roeweriella balcanica* Kratochvíl, 1932 from Croatia is discussed. The species is illustrated and re-described on the basis of the ♀ holotype. The genus *Roeweriella* Kratochvíl, 1932 (type species: *R. balcanica* Kratochvíl, 1932 by monotypy) is **synonymized** with *Marpissa* C.L. Koch, 1846, and therefore the new combination, *Marpissa* (*Marpissa*) *balcanica* (Kratochvíl, 1932) **comb.nov.**, is proposed.

Key words: Croatia, jumping spider, new combination, re-description, taxonomic comments

Although the European fauna of Salticidae is relatively well studied, a few taxa remain obscure and poorly known. *Roeweriella balcanica* described by KRATOCHVÍL (1932) based on a single female from the Balkan Peninsula is one of such taxa. Since the original description nobody has collected, re-described or commented on this species. Its male remains unknown. Nevertheless, an independent status of the monotypic genus *Roeweriella* created for this species has been in serious doubt. Recently, I have been able to borrow the ♀ holotype of *R. balcanica*, retained in the National Museum of Prague, Czech Republic (NMP; curator - Dr. A. Kůrka), and found out that the species is actually a member of *Marpissa* C.L. Koch, 1846. Thus, the main purpose of this brief communication is to re-describe this poorly known species and to discuss its proper taxonomic position. The format of species description follows LOGUNOV (2001).

Marpissa* (*Marpissa*) *balcanica (Kratochvíl, 1932), **comb.n.** (Figs 1-7)

Roeweriella balcanica Kratochvíl, 1932: 5, 8, 15, figs 5-8 (D♀; the holotype in the NMP; examined).

Material examined: Holotype ♀ (NMP; P6E-2871), '*Roeweria* (*sic*!) *balcanica*, X.1931'; no locality data, but according to the original paper by KRATOCHVÍL (1932: pp. 1, 14; see also RŮŽIČKA et al. 2005: p. 18), the specimen was collected by C. Drozdek in the close vicinity of Slavonska Požega, NW part of Balkan Peninsula [this is the town of Požega located in the south-western part of the valley of Požega river in central Slavonia county, eastern Croatia (c. 42°20'N/17°41'E and 150 to 300 m a.s.l.)].

Diagnosis: Compared to other European species of *Marpissa* (see HARM 1981: figs 5-8; LOGUNOV 1999: figs 33-34, 43), *M. balcanica* differs in having more widely separated copulation openings (Fig. 1) and much shorter and less meandering insemination ducts (Figs 2-3).

Comments: By assigning this species to a new genus, KRATOCHVÍL (1932) exaggerated the value of the fissidentate state of the retromarginal tooth of the chelicerae (Fig. 7). On the one hand there are other salticid genera, e.g. *Harmochirus* Simon, 1885 (see LOGUNOV 2001: p. 223), which contain both unidentate and fissidentate species, and hence the fissidentate state of the marginal teeth is of weak taxonomic value. On the other hand, the retromarginal tooth of such species as *M. muscosa* (Clerck, 1757) and *M. pomatia* (Walckenaer, 1802) (see LOGUNOV 1999: figs 18-19) has an extended lateral edge (almost developed as a second cuspid) and looks nearly like a usual fissidentate tooth. Yet, the structure of the retromarginal tooth seems to have been the main reason why in his diagnosis KRATOCHVÍL (1932: p. 5) compared the newly erected genus *Roeweriella* with two poorly known Neotropical genera *Fuentes* Peckham & Peckham, 1894 and *Balmaceda* Peckham & Peckham, 1894. Although the two latter genera are members of the Marpissinae (sensu EDWARDS 2005), they are close to *Metacyrba* F.O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1901 (see EDWARDS 2005 and RUIZ & BRESCOVIT 2007) rather than to true *Marpissa*, to which *M. balcanica* actually belongs.

The genus *Marpissa* (s.str.; the type species – *Araneus muscosus* Clerck, 1757, see METZNER

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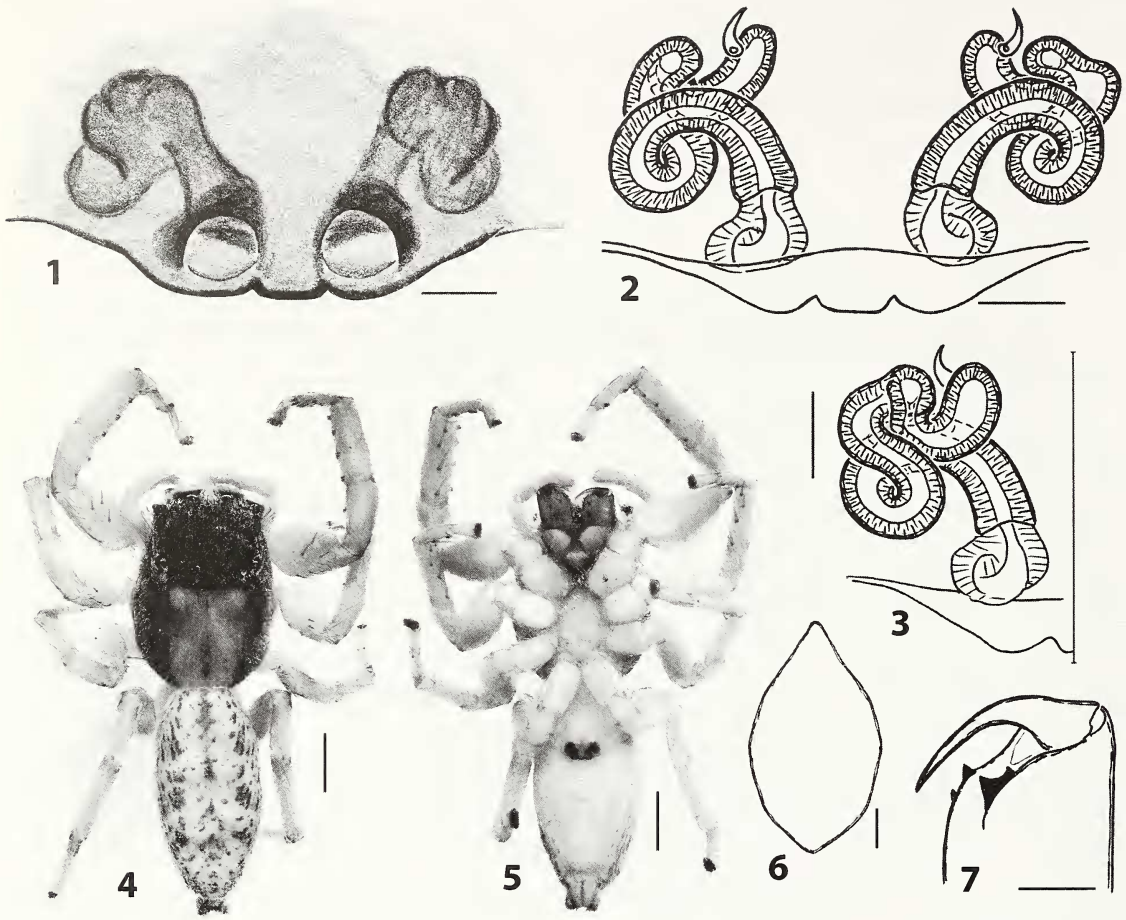

Figs. 1-7: The copulatory organs and body of *Marpissa* (*Marpissa*) *balcanica* (Kratochvíl, 1932). ♀ holotype – **1**: epigyne, ventral view. – **2**: spermathecae, dorsal view. – **3**: ditto, ventral view. – **4**: body, dorsal view. – **5**: ditto, ventral view. – **6**: sternum, ventral view. – **7**: left chelicera, ventral view. Scale bars: 0.1 mm (1-3), 0.25 mm (6-7), 1 mm (4-5).

1999: table 103) was recently re-defined and properly discussed by LOGUNOV (1999), and *M. balcanica* possesses all the female diagnostic characters of this genus: viz., the general body shape, with the wide and robust carapace (Figs 4-5); leg formula: IV, I, II, III, as in females of all *Marpissa*; the fovea is present and visibly depressed; the median septum of the epigyne absent; the spermathecal ducts are long and meandering; no hair-pencil beneath PLEs (but a poorly-marked bunch of hairs, Fig. 4); the sternum is elongated as in all other *Marpissa* species (cf. Fig. 6 in the present paper and figs 129-130 in LOGUNOV 1999). Furthermore, legs III and IV of *M. balcanica* have poor spination (see below), similar to other *Marpissa* species. Although the species possesses the comparatively short spermathecal ducts (Figs 2-3; cf. figs 6-8 in HARM 1981 and figs 66-71 in LOGUNOV 1999), which are more similar to those of the congeners of the subgenus *Hyctia* Simon, 1876 (sensu LOGUNOV 1999: pp 44-46), the proportions of its body (Fig. 4), with wide carapace and relatively short abdomen (length/width ratio is 1.9, compared to 3.0-5.0 in *Hyctia*), are evidence that *M. balcanica* is better placed in the subgenus *Marpissa*. There is no doubt that *M. balcanica* is a member of *Marpissa* (*Marpissa*), and thus a new combination is proposed here.

Distribution: The type locality only: the vicinity of Požega, eastern Croatia.

Description: *Female* (the holotype): Carapace 3.43 long, 2.40 wide, 1.05 high at PLE. Ocular area 1.48 long, 1.83 wide anteriorly and 1.76 wide posteriorly; the 2nd eye row is about in midway between the 1st eye row and PLEs. Diameter of AME 0.50. Abdomen 3.53 long, 1.83 wide. Cheliceral length 0.70. Clypeal height 0.10. Length of leg segments: I 1.73

+ 1.15 + 1.40 + 1.00 + 0.45; II 1.45 + 0.93 + 1.05 + 0.88 + 0.45; III 1.40 + 0.90 + 0.95 + 0.98 + 0.50; IV 1.78 + 1.03 + 1.38 + 1.18 + 0.50. Leg formula: IV, I, II, III. Leg spination: I: Fm d 0-1-1-0, pr 0-1-2; Pt v 0-1-0; Tb v 2-2-2-2ap; Mt v 2-2ap. II: Fm d 0-1-1-0, pr 2ap; Tb v 2-2-2-2ap; Mt v 2-2ap. III: Fm d 0-0-1-1-2; Tb v 2ap; Mt pr and rt 1ap, v 2ap. IV: Fm d 1-1; Tb v 2ap; Mt v 2ap. Colouration: Carapace low, wide and robust, as in all *Marpissa* species, light yellow-brown, with dark brown eye field and black around eyes (Fig. 4); the entire carapace covered with white elongated adpressing scales. Fovea present and situated in a distinctly depressed area of the carapace. Anterior-lateral side of the carapace, below the line ALE-PME, with poorly marked bunch of hairs. Clypeus very low, densely covered with long white hairs. Sternum yellow, tinged with grey. Maxillae, labium and chelicerae light yellow-brown. Chelicerae medium-sized: promargin with two small teeth, retromargin with one medium fissidentate tooth (Fig. 7). Abdomen entirely yellow, but dorsum with a reticulate greyish pattern (Fig. 4). Book-lung covers and spinnerets yellow (Fig. 5). All legs and palps yellow, without colour pattern; palps covered with long white hairs. Legs I strongest, as in all other *Marpissa* species. Epigyne and spermathecae as shown in Figs 1-3. *Male*: unknown.

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